

The Tree Commission Meeting for the City of New Castle took place on February 7, 2011 at 5:30 p.m. in the City of New Castle's Town Hall.

Members Present:      Chip Patterson, Chairperson  
                                 Susan Keyser, Co-Chairperson  
                                 John Lloyd  
                                 Toby Hagerott  
                                 Tom Truman  
                                 Nancy Coning

Members Absent:      Fran Peden  
                                 Erv Thatcher  
                                 Mark Miller

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Patterson at 5:40 p.m. Roll call was taken.

**Approval of Minutes – A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of the January meeting. The motion was adopted.**

#### Members Report

Susan Keyser – At the base of Dalby Alley there is a tree that tipped over, likely from soft soil. Mr. Thatcher should look at it.

Nancy Coning – Nothing to report.

Tom Truman – Asked about the status of removal of the Ratchford trees. The homeowner wants to schedule masonry work and go before HAC. Mr. Patterson will contact Mr. Samluk to line up the work. Also discussed was responsibility for the spruce tree on Dewey Park. The Trustees own the property. Concerns were expressed about the shape of the tree and its branches. Some of the branches are held up with straps. Ms. Keyser would like to look at the tree before deciding on trim work. (*Discussion followed.*)

John Lloyd – Nothing to report.

Toby Hagerott – Mr. Hagerott announced he would be resigning from the Tree Commission effective March/April 2011 due to his move from the City. He was appointed by City Council and will submit a letter to them informing of his intentions.

#### Chairman's Report

Mr. Patterson informed he would like to step down from his role as chairman of this body at the January meeting. Mr. Lloyd will speak to him about duties and responsibilities involved before making a decision.

Mrs. Marini has contacted Mr. Patterson about remediation work to be done on her property at 3<sup>rd</sup> and South Street as noted in the January 2010 Tree Commission minutes. Discussion included the importance of allowing review of remediation work by neighbors before any action from this body takes place. Lengthy discussion followed about who is responsible for notification. A copy could be made available for public viewing in a common location such as the library and registered letters sent

Chairman's Report (Contd.)

to neighbors. The plan should also be provided to Mr. Bayard Marin who represented the late Mr. Wheeler and Ms. Klyce at the January 2010 meeting. The question of responsibility for notification will be taken up with the City Solicitor.

Tom Maddux of the Beautification Committee has been in discussions with the Delaware Center for Horticulture about getting trees from them for planting in Station Park. Mr. Maddux expressed his concern about interfering on the Tree Commission. The Tree Commission is responsible for all trees on City property so whatever is planted becomes this body's responsibility to maintain. Mr. Patterson is not opposed to the Beautification Committee planting in the City. Discussion included concerns of sustainability of trees in Station Park due to the debris in the area. Mr. Patterson suggested that Mr. Maddux speak to Erv Thatcher about the location before any planting is done. Mr. Maddux will be meeting with the horticulture group on 2/16/11. Ms. Keyser will look into what Mr. Maddux is proposing.

Dike Restoration – Currently there are evaluations being performed on all the dikes in the City by Greenstone Engineering. At a recent public meeting a representative from Greenstone suggested that many trees should be removed along the dikes because they can compromise same. An advisory committee has been formed to look at the problems the City faces associated with dikes and to find partners to help with funding. Mr. Patterson informed Mr. Maddux of this engineering study as a courtesy. *(Mr. Patterson described some of what Greenstone presented at the public meeting. Lengthy discussion followed.)* Ms. Keyser expressed her concern with removal of trees along the dikes; she was not present at the public meeting. Mr. Lloyd suggested reviewing the engineering study.

Old Business

Mr. Patterson has not talked to Russ Carlson about several tree issues around the City. Issues include The Strand at Harmony Street, trees raising sidewalks on 6<sup>th</sup> Street and tree next to the Methodist Church that are raising sidewalks along the graveyard.

Ms. Keyser asked if the buckeye chestnut on Harmony Street is in potential failure mode. Mr. Truman said the tree has been in its current condition for a long time. Ms. Keyser is concerned with it falling. Messrs. Truman and Hagerott do not believe it is in imminent danger of falling but agree Mr. Carlson needs to give an assessment. *(Discussion about the tree's condition followed.)*

After discussion about the chestnut tree at the parish house it was agreed that the tree will need to be removed and Mr. Carlson does not need to give an assessment.

**Mr. Lloyd made a motion to remove the buckeye chestnut tree at the parish house. Mr. Truman seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**

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Old Business (Contd.)

Ms. Keyser inquired if anyone has spoken with Mr. Samluk about our concerns. Mr. Patterson has talked to him and invited him to our meeting. He believes Mr. Samluk needs some guidance; Mr. Lloyd would also like to talk to him. *(Additional discussion followed.)*

Mr. Lloyd informed he has not made contact with the homeowner in Van Dyke Village about the two (2) trees to be removed and suggested this body take the trees down and send an invoice to the homeowner. If no payment is received then the tree ordinance should be followed. The homeowner is being unresponsive to our attempts to reach him. It was the consensus of the Commissioners present to follow Mr. Lloyd's course of action.

Minutes

**A motion was made, seconded and approved to accept the January meeting minutes as prepared.**

Adjournment

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion was approved and the meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Debbie*

Debbie Turner  
Stenographer